



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/012,200	11/13/2001	Michael Becker	Westphal.6469	5272

7590 10/25/2006

PATRICK J. O'SHEA
O'SHEA, GETZ & KOSAKOWSKI, P.C.
1500 MAIN STREET
SUITE 912
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01115

EXAMINER

SWARTHOUT, BRENT

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2612

DATE MAILED: 10/25/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES**

Application Number: 10/012,200
Filing Date: November 13, 2001
Appellant(s): BECKER ET AL.

Patrick J. O'Shea
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

MAILED
OCT 25 2006
GROUP 2600

This is in response to the appeal brief filed 8-3-06 appealing from the Office action
mailed 9-11-03.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying by name the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

The examiner is not aware of any related appeals, interferences, or judicial proceedings which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The summary of claimed subject matter contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The appellant's statement of the grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal is correct.

(7) Claims Appendix

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(8) Evidence Relied Upon

(9) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murakami.

Murakami discloses a vehicle multimedia system (col. 7, lines 25-37) including a plurality of multimedia units connected to a ring-shaped bus 3 (Fig. 1), it being noted that each node N1-N4 can comprise at least one multimedia device (col. 7, lines 20-21), each multimedia unit comprising a transceiver unit to communicate over the ring-shaped bus 3, and a network controller (NC1-NC4) that controls communication of transceiver units over the ring-shaped bus, except for specifically stating that each multimedia unit has a plurality of transceivers.

It is noted that since each individual controller NC1,NC2,NC3,NC4 controls its respective node, and data from this node is exchanged with other nodes via bus 3, each controller can be considered to be a network controller since data from its node is used in communications over the whole network served by the bus 3 structure.

However, even though Murakami does not specifically show the multimedia devices connected to the node in the Figures, such devices are connected to the nodes (col. 7, lines 20-21). Since Murakami further states that the controller for a node

controls the function of the node so as to allow exchange of data between functional units of different nodes, and that each multimedia device can exchange data with its particularly connected node (col. 7, lines 15-24), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to utilize some type of transmission and reception means to allow data to be exchanged between a multimedia device and respective controllers, nodes and adjacent nodes.

Thus, since each node has transmission and reception means for a multimedia device, and also node communication transmitter/receiver 11/29, each node would have comprised at least plural transceiver units.

Furthermore, it can be stated that transmitter/receiver means for each multimedia device would have been inherent, since each of plural multimedia devices connected to a given node would have required transmission and reception means in order to exchange data with the controller and adjacent nodes. Use of a transceiver versus a transmitter/receiver pair is well known in the art for desirability of space and cost savings. Thus, if a node with plural multimedia devices (functional units) was used, each node would have had plural transmission/reception means.

Also, since appellant does not specifically set forth limiting details in the claim for what a multimedia unit can be, node pair N1 and N4 in Murakami can be considered to be a "multimedia unit" since Murakami clearly sets forth that each node can comprise at least one multimedia device or functional unit (col. 7, lines 20-27), Murakami clearly setting forth that each node has at least one transmitter/receiver pair 11/29 (Fig. 2).

Art Unit: 2612

Thus, a node pair would have had at least two transmitter/receiver pairs 11/29, even if each node only had a single multimedia device (functional unit).

Regarding claim 2, Murakami teaches use of a ring bus (Fig. 1, Fig.4).

Regarding claims 3-9, Murakami teaches use of navigation devices and entertainment devices as functional units (multimedia devices) (col. 7, lines 29-36), including radio receiver, TV, CD, DVD, disk device, tape recorder and navigation system.

Regarding claim 10, since Murakami teaches that plural multimedia devices can be operated and controlled by control unit (NC1-NC4), each multimedia unit would have been configured as a multimedia network operating and control unit.

Regarding claims 11 and 13, claims are rejected for the same reasons as stated above with regard to claim 1.

Regarding claims 12 and 14, the ring-shaped data bus is arranged as a "media oriented systems transport bus", since data from multimedia device (functional device) at one node is exchanged with other nodes via the bus transport means 3.

(10) Response to Argument

On pages 6-7 of the appeal brief filed 8-3-06, appellant states that Murakami only includes a single transceiver with each node. For at least the reasons as shown above, Murakami discloses plural transceivers at each "multimedia unit", which could be considered as a single node or plural nodes.

On page 6 it is argued that a network controller controls communication of plural transceiver units over the bus.

Since each controller means NC1-NC4 of Murakami controls data exchange for multimedia devices at the node for communication to other nodes, each controller would have acted as a network controller since each node would have received communications which would have then been communicated to additional nodes.

Regarding remarks on page 7, use of a single receiver 11 and a single transmitter 29 is not regarded as plural transceivers, but use of such at plural node pairs would have been regarded as plural transceivers, as would use of a transceiver 11/29 with additional transmission/reception means associated with individual multimedia devices (functional units) connected at each node.

(11) Related Proceeding(s) Appendix

No decision rendered by a court or the Board is identified by the examiner in the Related Appeals and Interferences section of this examiner's answer.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Swarthout


BRENT A. SWARTHOUT
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Conferees:

Michael Horabik

Daniel Wu


DANIEL WU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

MICHAEL HORABIK
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800
